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ABSTRACT

An evaluation of Special Project E-109A, Development of Teaching Aids for Adult Basic Education/English (Second Language) Adult Education Programs, by the project consultant was based on five project visits and bi-weekly communication with the project specialist. Evaluation was directed to an analysis of the basic structure of the teaching packets (Shopping, Jobs, Bank, Returning Merchandise, and Calling a Doctor and Going to the Doctor's Office), the self-evaluation instrument for teachers, and the life situation orientation of the materials. Overall evaluation indicated that the project had been clearly planned and logically carried out; the packets were well organized linguistically and structurally, progressing from the simple to the most complex, and dealt directly with life-centered situations. Further continuation of the project and an opportunity for empirical assessment were recommended. (EA)

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EVALUATION

by

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DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHING AIDS FOR ABE/ESL
ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Helen Alkasab: Project Specialist

I. Purpose of Project: The purpose of the project was to produce teaching materials and aids for classes in English as a Second Language at the Adult Level.

II. Time Spent by Consultant on Project: The consultant has made five visits to the project in addition to bi-weekly communication with Ms. Alkasab, the project specialist. On the basis of the above time spent on the project, the following evaluation is written.

III. Need for Materials in ABE/ESL: ABE/ESL is a substantially new field. The census reports and other studies provide us with the information that there are approximately eleven (11) million illiterates in the United States.[1] The numerous

[1] Bartley, Diana E. and Carl James.

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programs that have been begun in over a period of six years since the passing of the 1969 amendments to the Adult Education Act, have been using traditional materials in ESL not applicable either linguistically or situationally to the needs of adult basic education students. At present, there are a minimal number of publications that even lend themselves to adult language learning problems and the majority of these are "homegrown" and produced without utilization of professional expertise in the field. In view of the above, the materials which Ms. Alkasab has produced are not only needed but produced according to a well-thought plan utilizing classroom teachers and ABE staff for the final application of the lesson design and the content matter.

IV. Description of the Complete Packet: The packets include three basic sections: A. the visuals, B. the teacher's manual, and C. the student pages.

A. The Visuals. The visuals are used to implement the lessons. They have three functions. 1) They permit the students to have a vicarious experience of the life situation being studied. 2) They are a spring-

board for discussion. 3) They are used as a stimulus for the language drills. In my opinion, the threefold use of the materials shows an efficient use of visuals.

B. Teacher's Manual. The Teacher's manual of each packet is well planned. It includes a discussion of the life situation, a variety of oral language drills, and directions for using the reading and writing pages. The teacher's manual includes detailed directions and methodical discussion that can be used by everyone including novice teachers or aides. Perhaps the strength of this section lies not only in the above mentioned techniques, but also in the various alternatives for teaching presented to the teachers. The discussion section of the teacher's manuals address themselves to the traditions and social mores, the sociological and cultural dimension of the topic under study. This aspect of the materials is very complete, but not overly detailed. One very good example is the discussion of calling and visiting a doctor's office.

C. Student Pages. The student pages are provided for use in class. They contain the language drills detailed in the teacher's manual. They can be used for individualization or individual study by the teacher and student. Other student pages are dedicated specifically to training the student in reading and writing. Examples of reading and writing as oriented to life situation that the students can encounter are as follows:

1. filling out deposit slips
2. reading thermometer
3. learning how to read guarantees
4. filling out forms such as warranty forms; bank slips such as withdrawals and deposit slips.

V. An Analysis of Basic Structure of the Teaching Packets.

A. Student Section. Introductory drills are used as models for those that follow. Generally speaking, a similar structure in all packets has been adhered to: a one-item substitution form is used as a preparation for a multiple-item substitution, conversion or a one-item substitution using lengthier phrases or clauses. The material in these drills

is reinforced by a structured free response drill in which partial recall is required by the student. Reading drills follow in which students read while using previously learned morphological structures. Finally, writing drills are used for development of the writing language skill. The progression of language skill development is charted as follows: listening---speaking---reading---and writing.

The progression of drills can be charted as follows:

oral drills
- one item substitution
- multiple item substitution/ conversion/one-item substitution using lengthier phrases
- structures free response partial recall

oral and reading drills
- reading drills using morphological structures for conversion
- conversion drills
- question-answer drills requiring conversion or transformation
- conversation stimulus
- reading combined with Q-A

writing drills
- writing drills
- rewriting and combining drills
- reading question + writing free responses

Each packet also includes listening comprehension drills as well as drills testing reading comprehension.

B. Structure of Individual Drills. Each drill is structured as follows:

a) Drill number and/or title
b) Directions
c) Example of target language stimulus
d) Example of target language response

The following example from the JOBS packet taken from Drill 12, student page 4, serves to illustrate the above:

Drill 12:

Combine the sentences below with <u>because</u>.

Example: Maria called the beauty shop. She wanted an appointment.
Maria called the beauty shop because she wanted an appointment.

C. Teacher's Manual. The above-described student drill section is followed by a teacher's manual section in which directions and discussions for the teacher are presented as well as applicable alternative teaching strategies. The discussion in the teacher's manual section is directly correlated to each drill and

directions for alternative teaching strategies are boxed off for clarity; the desired and/or alternative possible answers are also included as a convenience for the teacher.

D. Evaluation of above-described basic structure of the teaching packet. The packets are well organized both structurally and in terms of the linguistic aspects. There is a progression from the simple to the most complex which helps students to build from their previously learned material. The packets are clear in both the student section and the teacher's manual. The overall evaluation is that the project has been clearly planned and logically carried out. These results will be optimum now to both students and teachers.

VI. Self-Evaluation Instrument for Teachers: A Pilot Instrument.

Reference: Shopping, Teacher's Manual p. 15
Jobs, Teacher's Manual p. 19
Bank, Teacher's Manual p. 37
Returning Merchandise, Teacher's Manual pp. 23-24
Calling a Doctor and Going to a Doctor's Office, Teacher's Manual pp. 33-34.

The self-evaluation instrument was drawn up in order to provide teachers and aides with the immediate knowledge of results in order for them to alter or try to keep teaching their techniques according to their interpretation of the results of the self-evaluation instrument. The two principal advantages of the instrument are that:

1. It provides almost immediate feedback for the teacher about her/his teaching;

2. provides teacher with the awareness about specific strengths or weaknesses in his or her teaching performance for the lesson in question. The teacher can then incorporate this information into his or her teaching performance.

Pupil evaluation instrument. This pilot instrument gives teacher a basis for lesson planning and individualization of teaching strategies for students. After rating the students on the instrument, if the teacher perceives that only some students have achieved objectives, then the teacher will know that a review is in order prior to proceeding to teach new material.

VII. Life Situation Orientation.

The materials are life situation oriented. The topics are relevant to the everyday lives of the students such as:

A. Shopping; B. Jobs; C. Returning Merchandise; D. Banking; E. Calling the Doctor and Going to the Doctor's Office.

Examples:

A. Shopping.

The prices of items are used orally at first and then for reading. Students practice using currency and paper money. The currency used is a very similar facsimile to actual currency in use today except it is cardboard. This activity forms a part of the shopping list game accompanying the lesson. It is practical and interesting. It is fun for the students after a hard day at work and yet a good learning activity.

B. Jobs. This lesson provides two aspects:

1. Specific job descriptions from the employment standpoint, i.e. what training does one need to become a barber.

2. Discussions dealing with various service occupations, i.e. the barber, but from the point of view of the consumer. For example: what does it cost to get a haircut?

C. Returning Merchandise. Students learn about alternatives for returning defective merchandise, for requesting replacement of defective merchandise; reading and interpreting guarantees.

D. Banking.

The students learn about major services offered by bank (checking accounts, safety deposit boxes, etc.) Understanding savings accounts and how to fill out deposit and withdrawal slips, etc. A trip to the bank usually follows the lesson.

The lesson is very practical but when coupled with a practical experience, it becomes doubly meaningful. It is a lesson which has tremendous pragmatic value but also strong in making certain that necessary vocabulary is learned.

E. Calling the Doctor and Going to the Doctor's Office.

Students learn how to describe symptoms on the telephone and in person. Patterns used are meaningful and students in elementary can work with some of the material.

Students learn how to make appointments, follow directions, ask about fees, etc.

Cultural mores related to this lesson are subtle yet observable. There are differences between Europe and other parts of the world on the one hand when dealing with physicians and the United States on the other. In this country, one must

request the fee prior to the visit--in Europe, this is unheard of--the medical system is socialized. The above packets deal directly with the type of everyday situation in which the students find themselves. Therefore, the information, in terms of actual content matter, gives students the opportunity of learning to deal with situations in which they may eventually find themselves. Therefore, the materials are extremely useful not only in the sense of the language training, the cultural mores but in the actual practice of life centered situations.

The only recommendation to be made is that the State of Illinois should provide (1) continuation for the project and (2) an opportunity for an empirical assessment of the materials.

The materials project has been referred to in Wisconsin and the possibility of a similar project to be carried out in Wisconsin to dovetail with and complement the Illinois project is in discussion stages.

Respectfully submitted,

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Associate Professor